

Eliciting and Utilizing Willingness to Pay: Evidence from Field Trials in Northern Ghana

Online Appendices

James Berry, Greg Fischer and Raymond Guiteras*

March 2019

Contents

A	BDM Script	1
B	Measurement of Risk and Ambiguity Aversion	6
C	Attrition	7
D	Heterogeneous Treatment Effects, Detail	8
	D.1 Heterogeneous Treatment Effects: Theory, Detail	8
	D.2 Comparison with Local Instrumental Variables	10
E	Sunk Cost Effects	11
F	Framework for Compensating Behavior	12
G	Policy Counterfactuals, Detail	15
H	Valuing Health, Detail	17
I	Correlates of WTP, Detail	18
	I.1 Feature Selection	18
	I.2 Cross Validation	20

*Berry: University of Delaware, jimberry@udel.edu; Fischer: London School of Economics, g.fischer@lse.ac.uk; Guiteras: North Carolina State University, rpguiter@ncsu.edu.

J	Mechanism Effects, Detail	22
J.1	Comparing Demand Under BDM and TIOLI	22
J.2	Correlation Between BDM-TIOLI Gap and Risk Aversion	22
J.3	Correlation Between BDM-TIOLI Gap and Observables	23
J.4	BDM and TIOLI Experimental Sub-Treatments	24
J.5	Comparing Demand for Soap	25
J.6	Ex Post Regret	25
K	Using BDM in the Field	27
	References	28
	Tables and Figures	30

A BDM Script

Section numbers refer to survey instrument. For full text of all sales treatments, see the Supplemental Materials.

J. REGULAR_BDM

READ EXACTLY FROM SCRIPT. DO NOT SAY ANYTHING THAT IS NOT IN SCRIPT.

READ:

- We would like to sell you a filter but the price is not yet fixed. It will be determined by chance in a game we are about to play.
- You will not have to spend any more for the filter than you really want to.
- You may even be able to buy it for less.

Here is how the promotion works:

- I will ask you to tell me the maximum price (*dan kuli*) you are willing to pay (*ka a ni sagi dali*) for the *Kosim* filter (koterigu di mali lokorigu).
- In this cup, I have many different balls with different numbers on them.
- The numbers represent prices for the filter.
- Then I will ask you to pick a ball from the cup, and we will look at the price together.
- If the number you pick is less than or equal to your bid, you will buy (*ani too dali*) the filter and you will pay the price you pick from the cup.
- If the number you pick is greater than your bid, then you cannot buy the filter.
- You will only have one chance to play for the filter.
- You cannot change your bid after you draw from the cup.
- You must state a price that you are actually able to pay now.
- We will practice in one moment, but for now, do you have any questions?

Answer any questions respondent has.

J.1 REGULAR_BDM PRACTICE

REMEMBER: Get respondent to state **HIGHEST** price they are **WILLING AND ABLE** to pay right now.

NOTE: Refer to p.23 for correct Dagbani translation of Cedi amounts.

- Before we play for the filter, let's practice the game. We'll play the same game, but instead of playing for the filter, we will play for this bar of soap. **Show respondent soap.**
- 1) What is the maximum amount (dan kuli) that you are willing to pay for this soap?
[Respondent states price X]
- 2) Now, if you pick a number that is less than or equal to X, you will buy the soap at the price you pick. If you pick a number greater than X, you will not be able to purchase the soap, even if you are willing to pay the greater number. You cannot change your bid after you pick a price. Do you understand?
- 3) Please, tell me - if you pick [X+5 peswas] now, what happens? **If respondent does not give correct answer, explain the rules again and then ask question again.**
- 4) And if you pick [X-5 peswas] now, what happens? **If respondent does not give correct answer, explain the rules again and then ask question again.**
- 5) If you draw [X+5], will you want to purchase the soap for [X+5]?
IF YES: → 5)
IF NO: → 6)
- 6) Do you want to change your bid to [X+5]?
IF YES: OK, your new bid is [X+5]. → 2) [use X+5 as new X]
IF NO: → 6)
- 7) So, is X truly the most you would want to pay?
IF YES: → 7)
IF NO: → 1)
- 8) If you pick X, you must be able to pay X. Are you able to pay X now?
IF YES: → J.1.1
IF NO: What is the maximum price you are willing and able to pay now? → 2) [use new X]

→ Record respondent's Final Bid (J.1.1, page 29)

- 9) Could you please fetch the amount you have stated you are willing to pay and show it to me?

Wait for respondent to fetch money and check to see she has enough funds for Final Bid.

- 10) Now you will pick a price from the cup. If you pick X or less, you will buy the soap at the price you pick. If you pick more than X, you will not be able to buy the soap. Are you ready to pick a ball?

Mix balls in cup, hold cup above eye level of respondent and have her pick a ball without looking.

- 11) Now you can draw a ball from the cup. ***Let respondent draw ball. Together, look at the ball and read the price picked. [Drawn price is Y]***

→ ***Record Drawn Price*** (J.1.2, page 29)

- 12) Let us look at the ball together.

→ ***Record if Drawn Price is lower/equal to or higher than Final Bid Survey*** (J.1.3, page 29)

- a. ***[If $Y \leq X$]:*** The price is Y which is [less than/equal to] the amount you said you would be willing and able to pay for this soap. You can now buy the item at this price.

→ ***Exchange payment for soap.***

- b. ***[If $Y > X$]:*** The price is Y, which is greater than the amount you said you would be willing to spend. You cannot purchase the soap.

- 13) Do you have any questions about the game?

Address any questions or concerns respondent has. Make sure she understands rules of game.

J.2 REGULAR_BDM FILTER SALE

REMEMBER: Get respondent to state **HIGHEST** price they are **WILLING AND ABLE** to pay right now.

NOTE: Refer to p.23 for correct Dagbani translation of Cedi amounts.

Read:

- Now you will play to buy the filter
- Recall the community meeting on [day of community meeting]
- Have you thought about how much you are willing to pay for the filter?
- Do you have the funds available now?

Let's begin:

- 1) What is the maximum amount (dan kuli) that you are willing to pay for this filter?
[Respondent states price X]
- 2) Now, if you pick a number that is less than or equal to X, you will buy the soap at the price you pick. If you pick a number greater than X, you will not be able to purchase the soap, even if you are willing to pay the greater number. You cannot change your bid after you pick a price. Do you understand?
- 3) Please, tell me - if you pick [X+1 cedis] now, what happens? *If respondent does not give correct answer, explain the rules again and then ask question again.*
- 4) And if you pick [X-1 cedis] now, what happens? *If respondent does not give correct answer, explain the rules again and then ask question again.*
- 5) If you draw [X+1], will you want to purchase the filter for [X+1]?
IF YES: → 5)
IF NO: → 6)
- 6) Do you want to change your bid to [X+1]?
IF YES: OK, your new bid is [X+1]. → 2) [use X+1 as new X]
IF NO: → 6)
- 7) So, is X truly the most you would want to pay?
IF YES: → 7)
IF NO: → 1)
- 8) If you pick X, you must be able to pay X. Are you able to pay X now?
IF YES: → J.2.1
IF NO: What is the maximum price you are willing and able to pay now?
→ 2) [use new X]

→ **Record respondent's Final Bid** (J.2.1, page 29)

9) Could you please fetch the amount you have stated you are willing to pay and show it to me?

Wait for respondent to fetch money and check to see she has enough funds for Final Bid.

10) Now you will pick a price from the cup. If you pick X or less, you will buy the filter at the price you pick. If you pick more than X, you will not be able to buy the filter. Are you ready to pick a ball?

Mix balls in cup, hold cup above eye level of respondent and have her pick a ball without looking.

11) Now you can draw a ball from the cup. **Let respondent draw ball. Together, look at the ball and read the price picked. [Drawn price is Y]**

→ **Record Drawn Price** (J.2.2, page 29)

12) Let us look at the ball together.

→ **Record if Drawn Price is lower/equal to or higher than Final Bid** (J.2.3, page 29)

a. **[If $Y \leq X$]:** The price is Y which is [less than/equal to] the amount you said you would be willing and able to pay for this filter. You can now buy the filter at this price.

→ Receive payment for filter. Record filter tracking code on survey (I.2.5, page 29). Record filter tracking code on receipt and give it to respondent. Inform her of where and when she can pick up the filter.

b. **[If $Y > X$]:** The price is Y, which is greater than the amount you said you would be willing to spend. You cannot purchase the filter.

→ **Go to Household Survey question J.24, page 29**

B Measurement of Risk and Ambiguity Aversion

This section provides additional detail on the hypothetical gambles used to measure risk and ambiguity aversion in the one-year follow-up surveys.

To measure of risk aversion, we presented subjects with a series of choices between (a) a 50-50 gamble for a gain of 8 GHS and (b) a certain gain of X . The certain gain X began at 0.5 GHS and increased by 0.5 GHS until the subject chose the certain sum over the risky gamble. We create an integer variable to indicate the switching point and reverse the scale to yield a measure increasing in risk aversion. For example, for a subject who chose the certain 0.5 GHS over the risky gamble—the most risk-averse choice—the variable takes on a value 11, while a switching point of GHS 1 corresponds to a value of 10. The median switching point was GHS 2, corresponding to an integer value of 8. We then repeated this exercise in the loss domain, in which we measured the minimum payment at which the subject would choose a 50-50 gamble for a loss of 8 GHS over a certain payment to the experimenter. Finally, we conducted the exercise in the gain-loss domain, in which we measured the minimum sum the subject would be willing to pay to avoid a 50-50 gamble for winning 4 GHS vs. losing 4 GHS, or, if the subject were risk-loving, how much the subject would need to be compensated to forgo such a gamble. In our analysis, we use the first principal component of these three measures, but the results in Section 6.2 are robust to other methods of combining them.

To measure ambiguity aversion, we presented subjects with a version of the game posed by Ellsberg (1961). Subjects were presented with one bag that contained 5 black balls and 5 white balls, and another bag that contained 10 black and white balls in unknown proportions. The subject would choose the winning color and draw from a bag. Subjects were asked to choose between the first bag with a payout of 4 GHS and a second bag with varying payouts. The payout of the second bag started at GHS 0.5 and increased by 0.5 GHS until the subject chose the second bag. We identify subjects as ambiguity averse if they required at least 4.5 GHS to choose the second bag. By this measure, 41.6 percent percent of subjects are classified as ambiguity averse. We also create an integer measure of ambiguity aversion that corresponds to point at which the subject chose the second bag.

E Sunk Cost Effects

BDM embeds a double randomization that allows researchers to separately identify two factors that may be important for understanding the relationship between prices and use: the causal effect of price paid conditional on WTP (a *sunk-cost* effect), and the correlation between WTP and use (a *screening* effect). In Section 4.4, we analyze screening effects, showing that there is evidence for a positive association between WTP and use in the long-term follow-up survey.

Because the price draw is random, we can test for causal effects of price paid by comparing measures of use for subjects with the same WTP but who paid different prices. For example, BDM generates the following experiment: consider three subjects, each willing to pay GHS 6 for a filter; one doesn't receive the filter; another pays GHS 6; and the other pays GHS 2. Thus, at every level of WTP above the minimum price, there is variation in both allocation and the price paid conditional on allocation.

Following the analysis of WTP and use in Section 4.4, we use three indicators of use: presence of an undamaged filter, presence of water in the storage reservoir, and presence of water in the clay pot. We estimate the impact of price paid on each measure separately and on an index following Kling, Liebman and Katz (2007).

Specifically, we estimate

$$\text{use}_{ic} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 D_{ic} + \alpha_2 f(WTP_{ic}) + \varepsilon_{ic}, \quad (6)$$

where use_{ic} represents the use measure, D_{ic} is the respondent's draw, and $f(WTP_{ic})$ is a cubic polynomial of bid. It is important to control adequately for WTP since, although the price draw was unconditionally random, conditional on receiving the filter it is positively correlated with WTP.

Table A5 presents results from OLS estimation of Equation (6). Panel A shows that there is little evidence for an effect of the price paid on use in the one-month follow-up. Panel B shows a similar null result in the one-year follow-up data. Taken together, this suggests there are no significant sunk-cost effects.

all possible thresholds. Figure A8 displays the AUCs for the BDM and TIOLI models. The diagonal represents the performance of a model that randomly classified each observation. For TIOLI and BDM, the AUCs are 84 percent and 79 percent respectively. While TIOLI outperforms BDM in predicting TIOLI behavior, their performance is remarkably close. We consider this encouraging evidence that, at least in this setting, the noise generated by the BDM mechanism is outweighed by the additional information it provides.

an actual purchase decision. The share of respondents who actually offered to pay more than their final bid is substantially less than those who stated they wished they had more, at 5.4 percent. If we adjust the bids of those who offered to pay more up to the value of the draw (and apply an adjustment for those whose bid exceeded the draw following the procedure described above) this would result in an average increase in WTP of GHS 0.07, which would account for little of the BDM-TIOLI gap.

Although the upwards revision of bids after the price draw could result from respondents misunderstanding the BDM mechanism, it is also consistent with non-expected utility maximization in which a respondent revises her reference point upwards when the price is revealed. Further, a substantial share of TIOLI subjects, 17.0 percent, attempted to bargain with surveyors over the randomly drawn price. As noted in the text, we take this as evidence that both mechanisms may have seemed unusual to respondents who are unaccustomed to fixed prices.

K Using BDM in the Field

This section offers additional discussion of the practical tradeoffs between BDM and TIOLI for researchers considering using one or the other method. The key advantages of BDM are precision in measuring WTP, the ability to separately identify selection by WTP and the impacts of price paid, and the ability to estimate heterogeneous treatment effects with respect to WTP. The key disadvantage is complexity, which carries both fixed costs – time to tailor BDM to local context and train enumerators – and variable costs – time to explain BDM to subjects, conduct practice rounds, etc. Which method is preferable will depend on context and the questions the researcher is asking, but the relative advantages and disadvantages just mentioned offer some general guidelines.

First, the number of prices at which the researcher would like to measure demand affects the choice. The more prices of interest there are, the more advantageous BDM is likely to be, since more prices will require ever greater TIOLI sample sizes. Second, if the causal effect of price paid is of interest and a surprise randomized discount is not feasible, then BDM becomes attractive, since TIOLI cannot separately identify selection by WTP from the effect of price paid. Third, the extent to which it is plausible that treatment effects vary by WTP affects the choice. If there is strong prior evidence that treatment effects are constant, or constant with respect to WTP, then this tips the balance towards TIOLI. Fourth, developing a context-specific BDM protocol is a significant investment, and it is important to spend time explaining to and practicing with subjects. Based on our experience, multiple demonstration rounds with a different product or products, emphasis on the bid as the subject's optimal response, training the subjects to understand their bid as their maximum WTP, and the understanding check after respondents stated their bids are essential to successful implementation. These procedures have been emphasized elsewhere in the laboratory literature as important for eliciting accurate WTP through BDM (Plott and Zeiler 2005), although more research is needed on how each detail may contribute to subjects' understanding. Finally, the cost of each observation (including the cost of the item itself, the cost of collecting follow-up data on use or the outcome of interest, etc.) affects the tradeoff. If each observation is very cheap, then the burden of increased sample size from TIOLI is less of a concern. If each observation is relatively expensive, it becomes more important to obtain as much information as possible from each subject and the balance tilts towards BDM.

References

- Ashraf, N., J. Berry, and J. M. Shapiro, "Can Higher Prices Stimulate Product Use? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Zambia," *American Economic Review*, 2010, 100 (5), 2383–2413.
- Bennett, D., "Does Clean Water Make You Dirty? Water Supply and Sanitation in the Philippines," *Journal of Human Resources*, 2012, 47 (1), 146–173.
- Bohm, P., J. Linden, and J. Sonnegård, "Eliciting Reservation Prices: Becker-DeGroot-Marschak Mechanisms vs. Markets," *Economic Journal*, 1997, 107 (443), 1079–1089.
- Brinch, C. N., M. Mogstad, and M. Wiswall, "Beyond LATE with a Discrete Instrument," *Journal of Political Economy*, 2017, 125 (4), 985–1039.
- Browning, M. and J. Carro, "Heterogeneity and Microeconometrics Modeling," in T. P. R. Blundell, W. Newey, ed., *Advances in Theory and Econometrics*, Vol. 3, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Cohen, J. and P. Dupas, "Free Distribution or Cost-Sharing? Evidence from a Randomized Malaria Prevention Experiment," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2010, 125 (1), 1–45.
- Da, Z., U. G. Gurun, and M. Warachka, "Frog in the Pan: Continuous Information and Momentum," *Review of Financial Studies*, 2014, 27 (7), 2171–2218.
- Ellsberg, D., "Risk, Ambiguity, and the Savage Axioms," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1961, 75 (4), 643–669.
- Global Burden of Disease Collaborative Network, "Global Burden of Disease Study 2016 Results," 2017. <http://ghdx.healthdata.org/gbd-results-tool>.
- Greenstone, M. and B. K. Jack, "Envirodevonomics: A Research Agenda for an Emerging Field," *Journal of Economic Literature*, 2015, 53 (1), 5–42.
- Heckman, J. J. and E. J. Vytlacil, "Econometric Evaluation of Social Programs, Part II: Using the Marginal Treatment Effect to Organize Alternative Econometric Estimators to Evaluate Social Programs, and to Forecast their Effects in New Environments," in J. Heckman and E. Leamer, eds., *Handbook of Econometrics*, Vol. 6B 2007, pp. 4875–5143.
- , S. Urzúa, and E. J. Vytlacil, "Understanding Instrumental Variables in Models with Essential Heterogeneity," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 2006, 88 (3), 389–432.
- Kling, J. R., J. B. Liebman, and L. F. Katz, "Experimental Analysis of Neighborhood Effects," *Econometrica*, 2007, 75 (1), 83–119.
- Kowalski, A. E., "Doing More When You're Running LATE: Applying Marginal Treatment Effect Methods to Examine Treatment Effect Heterogeneity in Experiments," 2016. NBER Working Paper 22363.

- Kremer, M., J. Leino, E. Miguel, and A. P. Zwane, "Spring Cleaning: Rural Water Impacts, Valuation, and Property Rights Institutions," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2011, 126, 145–205.
- Mazar, N., B. Koszegi, and D. Ariely, "True Context-dependent Preferences? The Causes of Market-Dependent Valuations," *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, 2014, 27 (3), 200–208.
- Nevo, A., "Empirical Models of Consumer Behavior," *Annual Review of Economics*, 2011, 3 (1), 51–75.
- Peltzman, S., "The Effect of Government Subsidies-in-Kind on Private Expenditures: The Case of Higher Education," *Journal of Political Economy*, 1973, 81 (1), 1–27.
- Plott, C. R. and K. Zeiler, "The Willingness to Pay-Willingness to Accept Gap, the Endowment Effect, Subject Misconceptions, and Experimental Procedures for Eliciting Valuations," *American Economic Review*, 2005, 95 (3), 530–545.
- Reis, R., "Inattentive Consumers," *Journal of Monetary Economics*, 2006, 53 (8), 1761–1800.
- Tibshirani, R., "Regression Shrinkage and Selection via the Lasso," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series B (Methodological)*, 1996, 58 (1), 267–288.
- Tobin, J., "Money and finance in the macroeconomic process," *Journal of Money, Credit and Banking*, 1982, 14 (2), 171–204.

Table A2: Relationship between Use and Willingness to Pay

	Filter present and unbroken (1)	Storage vessel contains water (2)	Clay pot contains water (3)	Usage index (4)
<i>A. Short-term effects</i>				
Bid (GHS)	-0.010 (0.010)	-0.008 (0.012)	-0.009 (0.013)	-0.022 (0.021)
Mean dep. var.	0.877	0.753	0.728	-0.003
Adj. R-sqd.	0.002	-0.002	-0.002	0.002
Num. Obs.	235	235	235	235
<i>B. One-year effects</i>				
Bid (GHS)	0.013 (0.014)	0.027* (0.014)	-0.013 (0.012)	0.018 (0.021)
Mean dep. var.	0.641	0.486	0.380	0.066
Adj. R-sqd.	-0.002	0.016	-0.002	-0.003
Num. Obs.	142	142	142	142

Notes: The sample includes those subjects in the BDM treatment who purchased the filter, i.e., drew a price less than or equal to their bid. Each column presents the results of a separate regression of the depend variable, listed in the column heading, on the willingness to pay, i.e, the subject's bid in BDM. Usage index is the average of the normalized values of the three individual usage measures. Usage measures are observed by the enumerator at indicated follow-up survey. Standard errors clustered at the compound (extended family) level in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

**Table A10: Relationship between Household Observables and BDM-TIOLI Gap
All Villages; Household Survey Measures Only**

	Pairwise (1)	Joint (2)
First principal component of durables ownership	0.007 (0.016)	0.001 (0.016)
Respondent has ever attended school	0.137** (0.061)	0.128** (0.059)
Has child age 0-5	0.138*** (0.045)	0.129*** (0.045)
Husband lives in compound	0.050 (0.053)	0.036 (0.053)
All-year access to improved water source	0.056 (0.060)	0.072 (0.059)
Currently treats water	0.022 (0.075)	0.028 (0.071)
Number of compounds	556	556
Number of households	1265	1265

Notes: This table presents estimates of the interaction between the mean BDM-TIOLI gap (the probability of purchase at 2, 4 or 6 GHS) and the household observable indicated. Column (1) shows the results of pairwise comparisons: an indicator for whether the household would agree to purchase the filter at the given price on an indicator for the BDM treatment, a level term for the indicated covariate, and the interaction between the two. Column (2) shows the estimated interaction terms in a joint regression. Coefficients are estimated for offer prices of 2, 4 and 6 and then averaged across the three prices, with standard errors calculated by SUR. Standard errors clustered at the compound (extended family) level in parentheses.

**Table A11: Equality of Bid Distributions
Comparison with Standard BDM**

	Market (1)	Anchor (2)
<i>A. Wilcoxon</i>		
Z-statistic	2.754	-0.900
P-value	0.022	0.748
Num. Obs.	411	408
<i>B. Kolmogorov-Smirnov</i>		
D-statistic	0.144	0.058
P-value	0.050	0.777
Num. Obs.	411	408

Notes: This table reports results of nonparametric tests for equality of bid distributions across BDM treatments. The anchoring and marketing BDM treatments (describe in the text) are separately compared to the standard BDM treatment. P-values robust to clustering at the compound level are calculated via randomization inference.

Table A14: BDM: Respondents Interested in Changing Their Bid Ex Post

Difference between draw and bid	Number whose draw exceeded bid (1)	Frac. who wished they bid more (2)	Frac. who tried to pay more (3)
Difference<1	20	0.45	0.30
1≤Difference<2	45	0.33	0.13
2≤Difference<3	44	0.25	0.07
3≤Difference<4	32	0.19	0.06
4≤Difference<5	33	0.12	0.03
Difference>5	159	0.12	0.00
Total	333	0.19	0.05

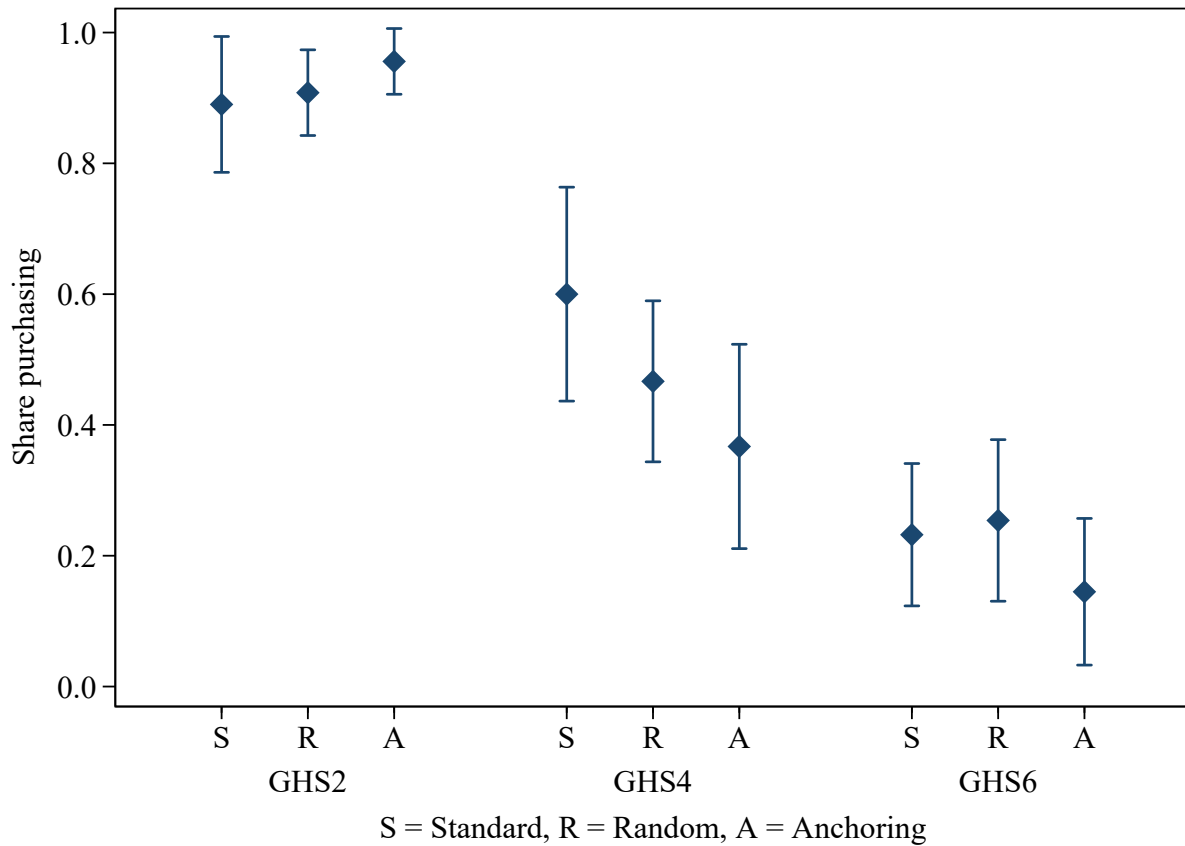
Notes: Column 1 presents the number of subjects in the BDM treatment whose draw exceeded their bid. Column 2 presents the fraction of those subjects who answered "Yes" to the question "Do you wish you had bid higher?" Column 3 presents the fraction of those subjects who attempted to pay more than their bid after the draw was realized.

Figure A1: The *Kosim* filter



Figure A2: Experimental Timeline for a Typical Village



Figure A13: Comparison of TIOLI Sub-treatments

Notes: This graph plots demand for the filter at each take-it-or-leave-it price, for each TIOLI sub-treatment. The random, anchoring and standard sub-treatments are described in detail in the text. Each treatment was randomized at the compound level. For the standard and anchoring TIOLI treatments, the price was also randomized at the compound level. For the random TIOLI treatment, the price was drawn by individual respondents. 658 observations, of which: standard 217 (GHS2 91, GHS4 70, GHS6 56); random 225 (GHS2 87, GHS4 75, GHS6 63); anchoring 216 (GHS2 68, GHS4 79, GHS6 69).